



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

March 9, 1998

H.R. 3117 **Civil Rights Commission Act of 1998**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on March 4, 1998

SUMMARY

H.R. 3117 would authorize the appropriation of such sums as may be necessary for the United States Commission on Civil Rights for fiscal years 1999 through 2001. The bill also would direct the commission to undertake several new initiatives with potential budgetary impacts. These initiatives include an independent audit of the commission's annual financial statement and studies on the enforcement of fair employment laws and on regulatory obstacles confronting minority entrepreneurs. The studies would be due by September 30, 1999.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary funds, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 3117 would result in additional discretionary spending of about \$28 million over the 1999-2003 period (if funding for the commission is maintained at the 1998 level with adjustments for the new initiatives) or about \$30 million over the five-year period (if adjusted for inflation and the new initiatives). The bill would not affect direct spending or receipts, so pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. H.R. 3117 would impose an intergovernmental and private-sector mandate, as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA), by authorizing the United States Commission on Civil Rights to use subpoena power through September 30, 2001. CBO estimates the costs of this mandate to be minimal.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

For the purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the amounts estimated to be authorized by the bill will be appropriated by the start of each fiscal year and that outlays will follow the historical spending rate for the commission. Because H.R. 3117 would authorize such sums as necessary for the commission, CBO prepared two sets of estimated authorization levels, representing continued funding at current levels of appropriations, both with and without adjustment for anticipated inflation. Both spending paths include estimated additional costs for the bill's directives to the commission, about \$1 million in fiscal year 1999 and less than

\$500,000 in each of the following years. The commission received an appropriation of \$8.74 million in fiscal year 1998 and has requested \$11 million for fiscal year 1999.

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 3117 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 750 (administration of justice).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Spending Under Current Law						
Budget Authority ^a	9	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	9	0	0	0	0	0
Without Adjustment for Inflation						
Proposed Changes						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	10	9	9	0	0
Estimated Outlays	0	9	9	9	0	0
Spending Under H.R. 3117						
Estimated Authorization Level ^a	9	10	9	9	0	0
Estimated Outlays	9	9	9	9	0	0
With Adjustment for Inflation						
Proposed Changes						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	10	10	10	0	0
Estimated Outlays	0	10	10	10	0	0
Spending Under H.R. 3117						
Estimated Authorization Level ^a	9	10	10	10	0	0
Estimated Outlays	9	10	10	10	0	0

a. The 1998 level is the amount appropriated for that year.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 3117 would impose an intergovernmental and private-sector mandate because it would authorize the United States Commission on Civil Rights to operate through September 30, 2001, and thus would extend its subpoena power. The Civil Rights Commission Act of 1983 (Public Law 98-183), which created the commission and granted it certain powers, that authorizes the commission to require state and local government entities and private persons to furnish testimony, records, and other relevant information under threat of a subpoena. The use of those powers constitutes a federal mandate. Because the commission would likely exercise its subpoena power sparingly, CBO estimates that the intergovernmental and private-sector costs of the mandate would be very small and well below the relevant thresholds in UMRA.

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